

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification on page 1, lines 1-2, by replacing the heading, which reads "Specification," and the terms that follow, which read "Plasma Processing Apparatus and Plasma Processing Method," with the following new paragraph:

This is a continuation of Application No. 09/720,910 filed January 2, 2001, now pending, which is a National Stage under 35 U.S.C. §371 of International Application No. PCT/JP99/03846 filed July 16, 1999, all of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 12, line 1, to read as follows:

[[Fig. 2]] FIGS. 2(a), 2(b), and 2(c) present[[s]] schematic illustrations of the pressure regulating units in FIG. 1;

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 12, line 3, to read as follows:

FIG. 3(a) is a schematic sectional view illustrating the inside of the processing chamber in the etching apparatus shown in FIG. 1 along the direction of the radius extending from the center of the wafer; [[and]]

FIG. 3(b) is a schematic diagram illustrating the radial distribution inside the processing chamber in FIG. 3(a);

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 14, line 15, to read as follows:

As illustrated in FIG. 2(a), a first open/close valve 121, a flow rate control valve (mass flow controller) 122 and a second open/close valve 124 are provided between the

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first gas supply duct 114 and a gas supply source 138 at the first pressure regulating unit 164. In addition, a manometer (capacitance manometer) 168 and a first discharge pipe 170 are provided between the first open/close valve 121 and the flow rate control valve 122. A pressure regulating valve 172 and a third open/close valve 174 are provided at the first discharge pipe 170. The manometer 168 is connected to the pressure regulating valve 172. A controller 140 is connected to the flow rate control valve 122 and the pressure regulating valve 172.

The second pressure regulating unit 166 shown in FIG. 2(b) is structured identically to the first pressure regulating unit 164. In particular, a first open/close valve 125, a flow rate control valve 126 and a second open/close valve are provided between the second gas supply duct 116 and the gas supply source 138. In addition, a manometer 176 and a first discharge pipe 178 are provided between the first open/close valve 125 and the flow rate control valve 126. A pressure regulating valve 180 and a third open/close valve are provided at the first discharge pipe 178. The manometer 176 is connected to the pressure regulating valve 180. The controller 140 is connected to the flow rate control valve 126 and the pressure regulating valve 180.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 14, line 28, to read as follows:

As illustrated in FIG. 1, at the front surface of the lower electrode 106 placed in contact with the inner ring body 112a, third gas supply duct 130 of the embodiment are provided. The third gas supply duct 130 are provided over specific intervals at positions that allow He to be supplied to the bottom surface of the inner ring body 112a. In addition, the space between the inner ring body 112a and the lower electrode 106 to

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which He is supplied is sealed by an O-ring 184 to achieve airtightness. The third gas supply duct 130 are each connected with a third gas supply pipe 132. A third pressure regulating unit 186 is provided at the third gas supply pipe 132.

The third pressure regulating unit 186 shown in FIG. 2(c) is structured identically to the first pressure regulating unit. Hence, a first open/close valve 133, a flow rate control valve 134, and a second open/close valve 136 are provided between the third gas supply duct 130 and the gas supply source 138. In addition, a manometer 188 and first discharge pipe 190 are provided between the first open/close valve 133 and the flow rate control valve 134. A pressure regulating valve 192 and a third open/close valve 194 are provided at the first discharge pipe 190. The manometer 188 is connected to the pressure regulating valve 192. The controller 140 is connected to the flow rate control valve 134 and the pressure regulating valve 192.

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